

DOCUMENT RESUME

ED 131 697

FL 008 152

TITLE Summary of Dr. John B. Carroll's "The Foreign Language Attainments of Language Majors in the Senior Year."

INSTITUTION Peace Corps, Washington, D.C.

PUB DATE Aug 68

NOTE 36p.

EDRS PRICE MF-\$0.83 HC-\$2.06 Plus Postage.

DESCRIPTORS Achievement Tests; Audiolingual Skills; College Language Programs; *College Majors; *College Students; Educational Diagnosis; French; German; Higher Education; Italian; *Language Instruction; *Language Proficiency; Language Skills; Language Teachers; *Language Tests; Modern Languages; Questionnaires; Russian; *Second Language Learning; Second Languages; Spanish; Standardized Tests; Study Abroad

IDENTIFIERS *Peace Corps

ABSTRACT

This report summarizes a study published in 1967 by Harvard University which assessed foreign language proficiency of U.S. college seniors majoring in French, Spanish, Italian, German, and Russian. The measures used were the following: the MLA Foreign Language Proficiency Tests (Form A): Listening, Speaking, Reading, and Writing; the Modern Language Aptitude Test, Sections 3-5; Questionnaire for Foreign Language Majors; and Questionnaire for Foreign Language Department Chairmen. After identifying factors associated with language achievement, the study suggested improvements in American foreign language teaching, including the advocacy of Foreign Service Testing. The major conclusion was that generally the level of achievement among foreign language majors at the senior level and that of teachers at the NDEA Language Institutes is poor. These findings are relevant to Peace Corps language trainees, whose level of proficiency is very high. (AM)

* Documents acquired by ERIC include many informal unpublished *
* materials not available from other sources. ERIC makes every effort *
* to obtain the best copy available. Nevertheless, items of marginal *
* reproducibility are often encountered and this affects the quality *
* of the microfiche and hardcopy reproductions ERIC makes available *
* via the ERIC Document Reproduction Service (EDRS). EDRS is not *
* responsible for the quality of the original document. Reproductions *
* supplied by EDRS are the best that can be made from the original. *

ED131697

SUMMARY OF DR. JOHN B. CARROLL'S THE FOREIGN
LANGUAGE ATTAINMENTS OF LANGUAGE MAJORS IN THE SENIOR YEAR

Office of Planning, Program
Review and Research
Division of Language
Training
August, 1968

FL008152

U.S. DEPARTMENT OF HEALTH,
EDUCATION & WELFARE
NATIONAL INSTITUTE OF
EDUCATION

THIS DOCUMENT HAS BEEN REPRODUCED EXACTLY AS RECEIVED FROM THE PERSON OR ORGANIZATION ORIGINATING IT. POINTS OF VIEW OR OPINIONS STATED DO NOT NECESSARILY REPRESENT OFFICIAL NATIONAL INSTITUTE OF EDUCATION POSITION OR POLICY.

TABLE OF CONTENTS

	Page
I. Introduction.....	1
II. FSI Subjective and MLA Objective Tests.....	4
III. Students.....	7
Sex, Age, Language Aptitude.....	7
Differences.....	8
Students' Ratings of Skills.....	12
IV. Factors in Achievement.....	14
Student Educational Background.....	14
Foreign Study-Travel; Length of Study.....	14
Intensive Language Courses; College Literature Courses; Other Foreign Language Study Besides the Major Language.....	16
Other Student Background.....	18
Pedagogical Variables.....	19
Institutional Variables.....	22
Regional Differences.....	24
V. Profile of the Superior Language Learner.....	26
VI. Recommendations.....	28
VII. Conclusion.....	29

Summary of Dr. John B. Carroll's The Foreign
Language Attainments of Language Majors in the Senior Year

by Joan Markessinis

I. Introduction

In 1967, Harvard University published The Foreign Language Attainments of Language Majors in the Senior Year by Dr. John B. Carroll, leading American psychometrician. The report assesses foreign language proficiency of United States college seniors majoring in foreign languages. After identifying factors associated with language achievement, Carroll suggested improvements in American foreign language teaching. The factors he isolated are also relevant to Peace Corps language training; his suggestions reflect favorably on its quality.

The target population for Carroll's research was all French, Spanish, Italian, German, and Russian majors graduating in 1965 from institutions offering B.A.s in foreign languages. From 771 such institutions, a sample of 192 was invited to participate. Because only 146 responded, an additional 101 were randomly selected. Of this 293 total, 203 (69.3%) finally agreed. They included 334 departments; 769 sub-departments. Public and private institutions differed little in response rate, but more larger institutions agreed to participate. The extent to which this trend may have biased the sample cannot be determined.

At these 203 institutions, 5,427 students (U.S. Office of Education figures) were available for testing, but student response rate was only 51.4%. In all schools, better students (as measured by grade point average) volunteered to be tested. To determine seriousness of this bias, Carroll studied correlations between Modern Language Association test scores and grades for tested students. Correlations were positive (between .27 and .55). He concluded, however, that amount of bias due to student non-response was insufficient to justify any general correction; and that national norms from the study could be corrected by lowering MLA skill scores one point.

But the correction procedure depended on correlations between MLA skill test scores and foreign language grade point averages. Carroll cautioned that college grades, "notoriously unreliable and subject to shifting standards", do not necessarily reflect the foreign language competence presumably measured by MLA skill tests. Grades in foreign language literature courses may reflect:

sensitivity to literature;

general ability to write critical essays;

study effort;

ability to impress the instructor.

If grade point averages had correlated more highly than they did with MLA skill scores, corrections for student non-response would have been greater.

After extracting 58 underclassman (2.0%) and 35 graduates (1.2%) Carroll had a legitimate sample of 2,787 college seniors:

French	1,270	German	413
Spanish	968	Russian	105*
Italian	28		

They represent 29.3% of the total number--11,633--of French, Spanish, Italian, German, and Russian majors (class of 1965).

Carroll's measures were:

The MLA Foreign Language Proficiency Tests (Form A):

Listening, Speaking, Reading, and Writing;

The Modern Language Aptitude Test, Sections III-V;

Questionnaire for Foreign Language Majors;

Questionnaire for Foreign Language Department Chairmen.

Only 2,587 students had scores on all MLA skill tests and only 2,534 took the MLAT. 2,389 had scores on both.

Most analyses in the study utilized only "regular" cases (2,604), i.e. those who were:

native speakers of English;

products of the normal American educational sequence;

not residents abroad for more than one year;

not trained in intensive courses (Armed Forces).

* Discrepancy between actual total, 2,787, and cited total, 2,787, is in Carroll's report.

II. FSI Subjective and MLA Objective Tests

In Spring and Summer 1965, an ancillary study with selected foreign language teachers enrolled in NDEA institutions established FSI-MLA equivalences. These equivalences were established because MLA percentile ranks and standard scores only indicate language competence relative to that of peers. For example, a student's language ability is rated thus: He speaks French better than 25%, and worse than 50%, of American college students. Except for the range of competence of the reference group than can be guessed, a percentile rank does not reveal an individual's proficiency in a foreign language. Further, group competence is relative to language difficulty. Proficiency of a group of English speakers in Korean is vastly different from its proficiency in Spanish. By contrast, FSI ratings define for individuals meaningful proficiency levels that are absolute for all languages.

The FSI-MLA equivalency groups were representative of the groups tested in the national college senior study. Correlations between FSI ratings and corresponding MLA scores were high, from .69 to .90. FSI Speaking ratings equal Listening and Speaking scores on MLA cooperative tests, FSI Reading ratings equal the Reading and Writing scores.

The FSI-MLA equivalents thus established disclosed that MLA tests, though touted as advanced, fail to discriminate among really sophisticated proficiency levels. Further, "There is no guarantee that MLA tests are sufficiently reliable and valid to identify native speakers with certainty."

1. Reading tests measure up to an R-4+ in French and Russian. In Spanish, there is not enough "floor" for low ability readers.
2. Speaking tests, measure up to an S-4+ in German and French.
3. MLA Listening tests in all languages are inadequate and fail to cover the FSI scale, yet Listening tests are the most valid measures of language competence and, conversely, the most predictable criteria measures. Listening tests only measure up to an S-3+ in French and Russian; S-4, in Spanish; and S-4+ in German. The French Listening test does not provide enough "floor" for low ability students.

These limitations may have clouded achievement results. For example, a number of students exceeded the S-3 level. If the

MLA test had been difficult enough many of the students between S-3 and S-3+ might have had higher FSI scores.

General equivalences were also established with the Meyers-Melton scale (1964):

	<u>Superior</u>	<u>Good</u>	<u>Minimal</u>	<u>Unsat.</u>
Listening	S-3+	S-2, S-3	S-1+	
Speaking	S-4	S-2+, S-3+	S-1, S-2	S-1
Reading	S-4	S-2+, S-3+	S-1+, S-2	

However, these correspondences did not hold for all languages.

For Russian, either FSI ratings are "unduly severe" or the Meyers-Melton rating, "unduly generous".

III. Students

A. Sex

Most foreign language majors are women: 84% of the French majors; 75% of the Spanish majors; 62%, Russian; and 59%, German. They do not differ from males in average language achievement.

B. Age

In French and Spanish, younger graduates tend to have slightly superior scores. But age groups are otherwise so close in achievement that no recommendation can be made from the study; 88.8% of the sample are between 20 and 22.

C. Language Aptitude

Those who select a "difficult" language like Russian tend to have higher MLAT scores than those selecting allegedly "easy" languages like Spanish.

"Apparently there is some degree of self-selection of languages according to language aptitude. Individuals' ratings of their own language aptitude tend to correlate with their MLAT scores and students can and do select languages to study according to their perceptions of their language aptitude."

But, on the average, the sample had a homogeneous, superior language

8.
aptitude as measured by the Modern Language Aptitude Test.

D. Differences

1. The most important way foreign language majors vary is in vocational goals.

- a. Most language majors plan to teach languages (64.4%). Slightly more females (65.5%) than males (61.1%) do so.

The highest proportion attracted to teaching study Spanish (67.6%) and the lowest, Russian (51.1%). Russian also differs because more males than females plan to teach.

- Teaching in secondary school draws by far the largest percentage, 85.3% (89.3% females; 71.2% males) Relatively few males plan to teach Russian at this level.

Proportions by language are:

Spanish	89.4%	German	78%
French	86%	Russian	55.6%

- Teaching at the undergraduate or graduate levels attracts 32.2% of prospective teachers and far more males (57.9%) than females (25%).

- Elementary school teaching attracts only 11.6%; most are females planning to teach French or Spanish.

b. Other than teaching

- Over half of those not planning to teach want government work.
- Almost as many, except those in Russian, are interested in business.
- 39% think of translating or interpreting, especially females in Russian.
- Other professional work such as medicine, science, and library science attracts "small but appreciable proportions".

2. The group also varied in their reasons for majoring in a foreign language:

- a. Interest in foreign travel or study, 71.8%;
- b. Interest and enjoyment, 60.8%;
- c. Literary and cultural aspects, 49.8%;
- d. Implication of foreign language study for intercultural understanding, 58.3%;
- e. "Need for a major" - "very few".

3. Carroll isolated six ways that FL majors differ:

- a. whether they plan to teach or use their language skills elsewhere;
- b. if they plan to teach, whether or not they plan to in elementary or high school;
- c. whether they plan to teach in college;
(If so, they usually do not plan to teach in secondary school and tend not to have chosen a FL major primarily for interest and enjoyment.)
- d. whether or not they are attracted by the intrinsic value of FL training;
- e. whether they have traveled or studied abroad;
Those who have, also have usually taken informal courses in their major and have read extensively.
- f. whether they have taken other languages beside their major, particularly Greek or Latin.

MLAT is correlated "to a considerable extent" with Latin study. Students tend to self-select themselves for Latin study on the basis of experiences with foreign languages, which are to some extent related to language aptitude. Also, Latin or Greek study may possibly enhance some

of the abilities intrinsic to language aptitude. On the other hand, exposure to grammar translation practices of most Latin teaching tends to transfer negatively to the audio-lingual method. Latin study, therefore, appears to influence, weakly and inconsistently, foreign language achievement.

4. Carroll then correlated achievement with vocational plans and reasons for selecting a foreign language major.

- a. Students planning to use their language skills in employment other than FL teaching tend to be slightly superior. Students interested in government careers do best of these, while students planning business or linguistics careers are generally representative.
- b. Those planning to teach at a given level achieve slightly better than those whose teaching plans are indefinite.

Those planning to teach in elementary school are representative of the total group.

Prospective secondary school teachers tend to be "significantly inferior". Prospective college teachers are "strikingly superior".

- c. For all languages, those indicating foreign language study for cultural understanding and communication scored slightly higher than average on MLA skill tests.

E. Student Ratings of Skills

Student importance ratings of any FL skill correlated somewhat with general foreign language achievement; however, all skills were rated more highly by prospective teachers than by others despite slightly superior attainment of majors not planning to teach. As expected, prospective elementary school teachers rated all four skills less important than did those planning to teach at higher levels. Prospective college teachers rated Reading and Writing particularly high; these had the highest average MLA skill scores of prospective teachers.

Overall, students rated speaking ability most important, with Listening a close second, although they were their worst skills. Reading was third, and Writing, last. French and Spanish groups tend to consider Listening and Speaking more important than Reading and Writing while Russian majors rate Reading highest and Writing lowest. These differences reflect well-known facts. Students in French and German are equally interested in oral communication and literature. Students of Spanish are more interested in oral communication than literature. Students of Russian are more interested in literature.

Students interest may reflect course emphasis or vice versa. French and Spanish courses tend to concentrate on audio-lingual skills; German and Russian, on Reading and Writing.

IV. Factors in Achievement

A. Students' Educational Background

1. Foreign Study-Travel

Study-travel abroad is universally the best predictor of, and most influential variable in, student achievement. Students who have studied an academic year abroad where their major is spoken natively are most consistently superior students. Those with two or more years abroad did even better. In particular, German and Spanish speaking test scores were strikingly better. Students who studied a summer abroad, travelled only, and/or had a self-study program are still above average. Their achievement is intermediate to that of students with a year's study and those without foreign travel-study.

Such experience is not uncommon: 60.1% of the German majors; 55.3% of the Spanish majors; 51.5% of the French majors; 22.6% of the Russian majors study abroad. Significantly more women study Spanish abroad than men.

In fact, amount of study time appears far less important than kind. Home or foreign contact with the language is far more valuable than simple academic study.

2. Length of Study

Apparently, achievement is a function of length of study. On all tests those starting in grade school are superior to those starting in college. In French, successive differences are approximately equal. In Spanish, spread between grade and

high school starters is wider than that between high school and college starters.

About 64% of the total sample start the FL in secondary school. More French and Spanish students start in grade or high school than students of German. Still, most students of French and Spanish start in high school: 13.3% of French students start in grade school; 11.7% , in Spanish. A slight majority of German and Russian majors start in college. Further, because French and Spanish language courses tend to concentrate on audiolingual skills, while German and Russian courses emphasize Reading and Writing; those beginning French and Spanish early are more likely to have superior productive skills, while German and Russian students have better receptive skills.

People starting language study early also have more experience abroad than late starters.

Of French majors starting in grade school, 59.7% (versus 50.3% in high school and college) studied abroad.

Of Spanish majors starting in grade school, 69.1% (versus 52.9% starting in high school and 50% in college) studied abroad.

In German, however, only 49.6% of the high school starters had been abroad versus 69.9% of the college students.

Findings for French and Spanish possibly reflect economic factors; early starters have families economically able to send them abroad.

3. Intensive Language Courses

Those who studied their major in intensive language courses in military service did distinctively better than "regular" cases. This finding "speaks very well for intensive courses".

4. College Literature Courses

College literature classes significantly promote and predict language competence while language classes do not. For French, hours of college language courses, e.g. "French Grammar", are much less significant than is traditionally thought. They are "of relatively little weight, certainly for those who already have a solid introduction from grade or high school". Perhaps individuals arriving in college relatively less well prepared generally have to take more such courses to be admitted to literature courses and are generally poorer.

5. Other Foreign Language Study Besides the Major Language

Although not designed to do so, Carroll's research suggests that other modern language study positively effects proficiency in the major language. Possibly students with

greater language study experience do better simply because they have greater interest in and aptitude for foreign language study.

Slightly more than half the students majoring in a Romance language have studied another Romance language.

45.9% of the French majors studied Spanish; and 13.3%, Italian.

56.9% of the Spanish majors studied French; 10.8% of them, Italian.

65.2% of the Italian majors studied French; 17.4%, Spanish.

Due to lack of data, perhaps, study of related Romance languages did not appear to be more associated with higher test scores than was study of less related languages such as Germanic and Slavic.

French is a popular second language, even for German and Russian majors.

German as a second language is more associated with Russian majors, and to some extent with French majors.

Russian as a second language attracts few; it is most popular among German students.

Italian as a second language is primarily associated with other Romance language majors.

Those starting the major language in grade school were no more likely than high school or college starters to study other languages.

B. Other Student Background

1. Those students who listed no introductory courses did better than "regular" cases and were therefore assumed to have had unusual language experience, such as learning from parents and special tutoring. "Their numbers were substantial" in French, German, and Spanish.

2. Those claiming frequent use of the foreign language at home but are not native speakers of the language do almost as well as students classed as native speakers and perform significantly better than those with no such experience.

"Obviously home is an excellent place to learn language." In fact, after study abroad, home use of the foreign language is the second major predictor of student achievement.

3. Other Experiences in the Foreign Language

a. Those reporting informal courses tend to have higher proficiency scores. Such work may indicate special student motivation. Of 114 French "regular" cases, 29.1% indicated other course work; 24.9% did so in Spanish; 29.6%, in German; 19.3%, in Russian.

b. As independent reading increased beyond "a few pages" to three or more books, Reading scores increased monotonically. Men tend to have read more widely than women; French students, more than others.

- c. Many students indicated moderate or extensive use of the language in a job, with foreign friends, or in other extra-curricular situations. Those with extensive, and to a lesser degree, moderate use performed significantly better on MLA tests than those reporting none.

C. Pedagogical Variables

Carroll discussed four pedagogical variables: teacher pronunciation, use of the language laboratory, and student and teacher use of the language in class. He concluded that teacher pronunciation doesn't seem "to make much difference" and language laboratory use does not correlate with MLA test performance. Carroll indicated "no support for the idea of a language lab making any critical difference in student performance."

(Similarly, Dr. Albert Fiks recommends "either greater emphasis and a new seriousness toward tape recorder/language lab practice or elimination of that element from training.

Most current operating practice seemsto make expenditures for such equipment and magnetic tape a priori hard to justify, and make even the time investment pedagogically questionable."

A Quantitative Analysis of Language Training in the U.S. Peace Corps, p.xi.)

The most important instructional variables are teacher and student use of the FL in class. They are equally and positively correlated with MLA skill test scores. Language departments differed most importantly in this respect. In the first year, English use was reported as "frequent" or "occasional"; in the second year, English use was "occasional" versus "rare". Generally, departments reporting occasional use the first year reported "rare" the second year. Further, departmental policy or practice of avoiding English in first year courses reflects a general department policy for more advanced courses.

In all languages, students with class experience requiring use of the FL tend to gain more in audiolingual than reading and writing skills. For high school starters, however, active student use of the language in college literature courses also promotes receptive skills.

Degree of FL usage does vary by language. French and Spanish language courses tend to concentrate on audiolingual skills while German and Russian courses promote Reading and Writing. In French, English avoidance in first year courses is significantly correlated with mean student performance in Listening and to some extent, Speaking. In Spanish, it correlates with Listening, Speaking, and Writing; and even in German, with Listening and Speaking.

The statistically significant correlation of MLA skill scores with language use indicates that quality of instruction has an effect on student attainment. When quality of instruction (as measured by instructional variables here) is combined appropriately with information on:

student aptitude;

degree of interest in language learning;

amount of exposure in and out of school;

predicting attainment accurately is possible.

D. Institutional Variables

1. High School Language Instruction

High school language instruction was characterized by FL majors;

- a. Teaching is mostly in English.
- b. Students' classroom language is English.
- c. Language labs are little used.
- d. Teacher pronunciation ability is halfway between incompetence and native speaker ability.

College instructional procedures differ markedly from high school's. In college, the FL is used much more by teacher and student and the teacher's pronunciation is more likely to be native or near native.

Apparently these differences have been recognized, because traditionally, foreign language teachers have considered one year of a high school course and three semesters of grade school work equivalent to one college semester.

2. College Instruction

Institutions vary significantly in mean performance of their students, previous experience and aptitude held constant.

- a. Students at larger institutions obtain higher mean scores. In Spanish and German, but not French, the foreign language is more often used in the classrooms of larger rather than smaller

institutions. Single language departments and departments in larger institutions tend to have students superior to those of "family", or multiple language, departments or departments in smaller institutions. However, smaller student response rate at larger institutions might explain the tendency of larger institutions to exhibit higher mean MLA skill scores.

Larger institutions are more likely to have:

study programs abroad;

more courses;

more associated language-learning activities;

more degree requirements.

- b. Private Institutions have students with higher average achievement, particularly in French and generally in Spanish. In German, public and private institutions do not differ in mean Listening and Speaking scores, but students at private institutions tend to be superior in Reading and Writing. Public institutions, while offering more types of courses, tend to report fewer degree requirements and associated language-learning activities.

Students at private institutions are on the average so superior to those at public institutions because they:

1. start foreign language study earlier (Early starters in Spanish tend slightly toward larger institutions.)
2. have more travel-study abroad;
3. have teachers who use the FL more often in the classroom;
4. have more hours in literature courses, which increase with institution size (In German, more hours are reported in larger private institutions and smaller public ones.).

c. Institution size and type interact significantly for German and Spanish but not for French. Larger institutions and particularly private ones produce better language students than smaller ones, even after student backgrounds are considered. That is, good language students are at the largest institutions, especially private ones. For French, achievement averages correlate negatively in public institutions.

German, French, and Spanish majors who have travelled about three or more months tend to be in larger private institutions or, for German, medium-sized public ones.

Smaller public institutions are more likely to use language labs as integral to the language course, possibly to alleviate lack of teachers with native accents. For German and Spanish, high use also occurs in small private institutions.

- d. Departments emphasizing Listening and Speaking skills show slightly lower mean student achievement than departments reporting emphasis of all four skills.

Subdepartments teaching the more popular languages (French, Spanish, German) have more:

degree requirements;
associated language learning activities;
courses.

E. Regional Differences

Mean MLA skill scores are higher where languages are relatively more popular. French is more popular than Spanish or German in the Mid-West and New England, which has been traditionally closer to France and French Canada than have other regions

of America.

Spanish is more popular in the Plains, Southeast and Southwest, where Spanish influence has been, and is, strong.

German is more popular in the Rocky Mountain States, the Far West, the Great Lakes region, and the Pacific Northwest. The latter two have had larger proportions of German and Scandinavian immigrants.

Nevertheless, regions differ in overall student performance. Students in New England institutions are generally better in all languages. Only in Spanish are they slightly inferior to students in some other regions.

Students in the Plains, Southeast, and Southwest are generally poorer than those from other regions, except that students of Spanish in the Southwest do "quite well".

Therefore, the best language students are likely to be in large, private New England institutions, other things being equal.

The best French students are from private New England Colleges. Better Spanish students tend to be from large, private institutions in the Southwest.

German students tend to be from large institutions in the Mid-West or Pacific Northwest. The tendency for private institutions to produce better German students is not as noteworthy but still significant.

V. Profile of the Superior Language Learner

The factors Carroll has isolated as critical to successful language acquisition can be used to predict student achievement.

The superior language learner tends to have:

1. high language aptitude;
2. planned use of his language major in a career other than teaching, like government work;
3. studied the foreign language for its "communication and cultural understanding value" rather than for "interest" or "enjoyment";
4. traveled and studied abroad in a country where his major was regularly used;
5. used the language at home;
6. started study early, sometimes in elementary school, but at least as early as secondary school and continued;
7. taken many literature courses in college;
8. skipped introductory language courses, as indicated on college transcripts;
9. studied other foreign languages;
10. studied at a large, private institution with single, rather than multiple, language departments (New England institutions are best.):

11. had teachers, either in high school or college, or both, that used, and required student use of, the foreign language in class;
12. had other experiences encouraging use of the language, such as informal courses outside regular school; extensive voluntary reading; employment; foreign friends; social activities;
13. taken an intensive language course.

Romance language majors, in particular, are likely to have studied other Romance languages and to have stronger audiolingual skills than other language majors.

Reading and Writing superiority tend to be chiefly predicted by Section IV of the MLAT, "Grammatical Sensitivity"; by time not spent abroad; and third, college literature courses.

Active performance is predictable by relatively lower scores on Section III of the MLAT;

time abroad;

occasional or frequent home use of the foreign language;

early language study;

introductory and intermediate courses;

poor rote memory.

VI. Recommendations

From these findings, Dr. Carroll recommended that:

1. more young people be encouraged to begin foreign language study early and to continue through formal course work and, most importantly, through travel and study abroad;
2. teaching be improved by: offering more courses and requiring classroom use of the foreign language;
3. language aptitude tests be used more in guiding foreign language students, especially if they plan teaching, since language aptitude proved significant in attainment of foreign language skills.

VII. Conclusions

Three aspects of Carroll's report are particularly relevant to Peace Corps language testing and training:

1. his strong advocacy of FSI testing
2. achievement of United States foreign language majors
3. classroom use of the foreign language

Carroll's single most stunning finding is the inability of American language majors to speak the language.

Carroll concluded: "The language skills of college foreign language majors are far from impressive". Typically, mean scores in Listening and Speaking were about an S-2+, except Russian where the mean rating was an S-2. Reading and Writing centered around FSI ratings of R-3, except for Russian. The slightly poorer showing in Russian for all four skills may reflect the greater difficulty of Russian for English speakers or the United States' relatively smaller investment in teaching Russian, or both. "If Reading and Writing skill at about the R-3 level, minimal professional proficiency, is one of the goals for language teaching, only one half of the seniors in the sample attained this objective, let alone in Listening and Speaking."

Most striking is the general low median attainment in audio-lingual skills. Students are much poorer in Listening and Speaking

than Reading and Writing, except German where Listening was in the range of Reading and Writing scores. French speaking ability was particularly low but rating standards of French testers may have been unusually severe.

Mean skill scores of foreign language teachers at NDEA Language Institutes are even lower than those of senior language majors. Only about a third to a half are at a satisfactory level even in Reading and Writing.

An S-3 was considered a minimal qualifying level for foreign language teachers.

In French, 19.3% are qualified at this level in Listening; only 4.4% in Speaking; 47.9% in Reading; and 45.7% in Writing.

In German, more are qualified in audiolingual skills but about the same proportions are in Reading and Writing.

33.6% of the Spanish teachers qualify at the S-3 level in Listening; 27.8% in Speaking; 58.1% in Reading ; and 47.8% in Writing.

In Russian, 11.3% attain or exceed an S-3 in Listening; 6.2% in Speaking; 17% in Reading, and 12.4% in Writing.

The disappointing performance of foreign language teachers and majors compares poorly with achievement of Peace Corps trainees. Compare their mean achievement of an S-2+ after at least 4 years of language study with the S-2s of Peace Corps trainees after four weeks of high-intensity training in French at Dartmouth, Summer 1967; at Leland, Fall 1967; and Spanish at New Mexico, Winter 1967.

The only possible explanation for this striking difference is the superiority of Peace Corps language training, particularly in its intensity and insistence on use of the foreign language. Certainly, Carroll's results suggest that a key to higher oral language proficiency is using the language as much as possible during the learning experience. HILT encourages such usage in three ways. First, the earlier a "base" proficiency is attained the greater the possibility for actual usage of the language outside the language class. High-intensity training should produce greater language achievement than former training formats since its primary advantage -- earlier attainment of working proficiency -- opens up other areas in which the language can be used. High-intensity language training should then be at the beginning rather than the middle or end of training to instill trainees with language proficiency early enough to permit increasing use of the language in situations outside the language class during remaining weeks of training. Further, keeping trainees in class for 8 or more hours a day during

HILT maintains longer contact with correct usage by instructors and trainees. Most students find foreign language usage painfully difficult--particularly in the beginning--and therefore to be generally avoided. They will not use language on their own unless highly motivated. Finally, increased usage of language reduces response competition between English and target language phonetic, grammatical and lexical forms. The fewer times trainees hear already internalized English forms, the less reinforced and competitive they are with those in the foreign language.

By Fall 1968, we hope to have statistical information of these beliefs.